

**CITY OF SNOHOMISH
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
June 2, 2021**

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 declared federal, state and local emergency, and pursuant to Governor Inslee's Proclamations 20-05 and 20-28, the Snohomish Planning Commission held its meeting via remote participation.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was opened by Vice Chair Terry Lippincott at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 2, 2021.

2. FLAG SALUTE

3. ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Terry Lippincott, Vice Chair
Christine Wakefield Nichols
Van Tormohlen
Gordon Cole
Mitch Cornelison
Nick Gottuso

STAFF:

Glen Pickus, Planning Director
Brooke Eidem, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT:

Morgan Davis, general public
Thomas Kreinbring, general public

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Hank Eskridge, Chair

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA ORDER

Commissioner Gottuso moved to approve the agenda order as presented. Commissioner Wakefield-Nichols seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

5. APPROVAL of the minutes of the May 5, 2021, regular meeting.

Mr. Pickus presented a comment from Morgan Davis who had offered public comment at the May 5 meeting requesting that the minutes be amended so his reference to "townhomes" be changed to "wood-framed flats", as that is what he meant.

Ms. Lippincott requested to have her name added to the list of Commissioners present.

Mr. Cornelison moved to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2021 meeting as amended by changing "townhomes" to "wood-framed flats" as requested by Mr. Davis and indicating that Ms. Lippincott was in attendance at the meeting. Mr. Gottuso seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

6. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Morgan Davis thanked the Commission for changing the minutes. He felt the small town character of Snohomish is being ruined through the Pilchuck District and the Midtown project. Mr. Davis thinks the whole thing is unnecessary and the comprehensive plan does

not need changing. He believes the project is intended to block the mobile home park, as it would be a prohibited use.

7. DISCUSSION ITEM: Midtown District Comprehensive Plan and Development Code Amendments

Mr. Pickus presented staff-proposed draft amendments to the comprehensive plan and existing chapters of Title 14 based on recommendations of the Midtown Task Force. Staff is looking for input from the Planning Commission on these amendments and requests that after the meeting Commissioners send proposed specific language changes directly to staff, which will be incorporated into the final drafts presented at the public hearing.

Comprehensive Plan

By consensus, the Planning Commission agreed the following changes should be made to the draft policies:

- On page 22, the language of the Midtown District will be changed to reflect the fact that regulations will not have been adopted prior to the comprehensive plan amendments.
- In Policy MF 5.5, the language will be changed to “consider incorporating” block frontage standards.

Mr. Gottuso noted the language of LU 2.12b appears to conflict with MF 5.6. Mr. Cole agreed, noting if design standards make buildings cost more, then it will be more difficult to develop affordable housing. Mr. Pickus said one key goal of the Task Force memo is to reflect Snohomish character, and the way to do that is through design standards. However, it is also a goal to have affordable housing, so that is something to keep in mind.

Mr. Tormohlen brought up the topographic difference between the Avenue D and Bonneville frontages of the County site. He believes the two portions of the site should be regulated differently, as there is more opportunity for more density and taller buildings on the Bonneville side and that perhaps a third overlay should be incorporated. Mr. Pickus suggested a third overlay may not be the best solution and said he would work with Mr. Tormohlen to draft language to accomplish his intent.

Mr. Gottuso suggested also changing the last portion of CO 6.1e.4 to address the difference between Avenue D and Bonneville.

Mr. Cole suggested changing TR22 to clarify that the improvement plan should be in place before development begins. Ms. Wakefield Nichols suggested making the language more direct, such as “amend the City’s CIP to provide for the preparation...” Mr. Pickus said that the Commission’s role in this issue is limited to a recommendation for the wording of TR22. However, how the policy would be implemented is beyond the Commission’s jurisdiction. Still, he said he would include Commission comments about implementation when the policy is presented to the City Council.

SMC 14.25 Definitions

No language changes were discussed. Planning Commissioners will forward any suggested changes to staff for discussion.

14.205 Permitted Land Uses

Mr. Cole will propose a language change to SMC 14.205.070 to clarify that Snohomish businesses are still reliant on automobile traffic, and that will not likely change in the foreseeable future.

14.207 Land Use Tables

Several specific land uses were discussed. Ms. Lippincott noted there is an existing car rental use in the area that does not have a large parking lot so perhaps car rental uses should not be prohibited. Mr. Pickus suggested a footnote to allow the use with a limitation on the number of parked vehicles.

It was clarified that mobile home parks are already prohibited in the Commercial zone per SMC 14.207.070 and that RV parks are a different land use and are defined as a non-residential use.

Commissioners agreed that manufacturing uses should be allowed in Midtown provided all manufacturing activities take place within an enclosed building and outdoor storage is not allowed.

Planning Commissioners will forward any other suggested changes to staff.

14.210 Dimensional and Other Requirements

Density was discussed. Staff's recommendation is to not state a maximum density, as density is best controlled through building height and parking regulations. Staff also proposed a minimum density, which is a new concept for the SMC. Mr. Cole asked how a minimum density would apply to a mixed use or commercial development. Mr. Pickus noted that would need to be clarified; it should only apply to exclusively residential development. Mr. Cornelison requested changing "no maximum" to a different term such as "not applicable" as the language sends the wrong message to the community. Mr. Pickus will research how other municipalities regulate minimum density and bring back some new language.

Building height was discussed. Mr. Pickus reported that while the Task Force recommendation for the south overlay is 45 feet, the vote was very close as there was only one vote more for 45 feet than for 35 feet. However, the vote on the recommendation for allowing buildings to be up to 55 feet in the north overlay was more one-sided.

Planning Commissioners will forward any suggested changes to staff.

14.235 Off-Street Parking, Loading, and Access Requirements

No language changes were discussed. Planning Commissioners will forward any suggested changes to staff.

8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Pickus verified with the Commissioners that they received an email from the City Clerk regarding commission roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Pickus stated a code amendment will be brought forward at a public hearing at the next meeting to address separation between buildings in a Planned Residential Development in reaction to a very recent discussion regarding a current development. He discussed the provisions of SMC 14.220.100D, where he is proposing to eliminate the last three sentences.

The schedule and setting for the next meeting was discussed. Some Commissioners believe holding the meeting on the scheduled date of July 7 would be too soon after the July 4 holiday. Also, at least one commissioner indicated he would not be able to attend a July 7 meeting. Mr. Pickus explained it may be possible for the July meeting to be an in-person meeting but that cannot be determined for sure until Governor Inslee determines whether to lift pandemic restrictions. He is set to make that determination on June 30. By cancelling the July 7th meeting and scheduling a special meeting for July 14th it will make it easier to provide for an in-person meeting if the Governor determines that will be allowed. If it is an in-person meeting, it will be at the Carnegie Building and there will not be any remote access offered. An in-person meeting will only be possible if all commissioners are vaccinated so they would be able to sit around a table with staff without wearing masks or meeting social distancing requirements. Seating for the public will be set up to meet social distancing requirements and signage will instruct unvaccinated members of the public to wear masks, although vaccinated people can also wear masks if they want. The masking requirement will not be actively enforced but instead we will rely on the public to self-regulate.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2021.

By: _____ s/s Hank Eskridge

Commissioner Hank Eskridge, Chair